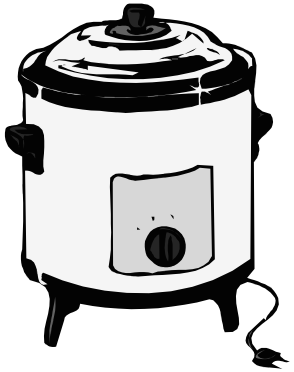
Benefits of Crock Pot Cooking



1) The crock pot offers "all-day cooking without looking." Most meat and vegetable combinations can cook for 8 to 10 hours unattended.

2) Food doesn't overcook or burn if left longer than required. Food cooked slowly will be tenderer after prolonged cooking. Liquids do not boil away as in conventional methods of cooking.

3) One-step preparation is convenient. Simply put all ingredients in the crock and cook. Exception would be adding milk, cream or sour cream during the last hour.

4) Simmered foods taste better than boiled foods because more natural juices and flavors of food are retained. Keep the cover on.

Every time the lid is lifted, add 15-20 minutes to the overall cooking time.

5) The crock pot is economical to operate. Low wattage over an extended period costs less than high wattage for a short time.

6) A wide variety of foods can be prepared. Less tender cuts of meat cook with less shrinkage and therefore, are moist and tender.

7) Food is heated, but not the kitchen. Clean up is simple if the crock pot is stoneware and is removable.

Slow Cooker Tips

Ideally, the initial temperature of the crock pot should be as high as possible. In the case of meat, this can be done by browning the meat before cooking. Vegetables can be placed in a pot of boiling water for a few minutes before putting them in the crock pot.

You may pre-warm the crock pot by filling it with boiling water for a few minutes.

Recipes suggest putting vegetables in the pot first and the meat on top.

- Don't set a hot crock on a cold surface. Always place a hot pad or towel under it.

- To speed up the cooking time of most recipes, including soups and stews, follow the rule that 1 hour on High is equal to 2 hours on Low. (This is not recommended for cooking desserts.)

- Fat retains heat more readily than water, so fattier recipes will cook faster than those with less fat. Trim meats and brown them prior to putting them in the crock pot.

- Steam accumulates on the slow cooker's lid and the contents of the crockery tend to get watered down. Use thickeners such as flour, cornstarch and tomato paste to give texture to the dish.

Serving and Clean-up

- Use a slow cooker on a buffet table to keep soup or stew hot.

- Soak, then scrub off all cooked-on stains between uses. Abrasive cleanser is fine for this. Don't be tempted to leave food residue on the crock. It will cook off and become part of your next meal!

To reduce any bacterial risk while using a slow cook crock pot, follow these simple rules:

1. Keep raw ingredients refrigerated until they are to be put in the cooker.

2. Thaw frozen meat or poultry before cooking.

3. Cut vegetables in small pieces to ensure rapid heat transfer.

4. When cooking meat, the water or stock level should almost cover the meat to ensure effective heat transfer.

5. Do not overload the crock pot. Half full to three-fourths full is recommended for most crock pots.

6. Do not leave cooked food to cool down in the crock pot. Either consume it immediately or cool the food rapidly and refrigerate.

7. **Never reheat leftovers in the crock pot.** Reheat leftovers on the stove, in the oven or microwave.

8. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

UW Extension 2012

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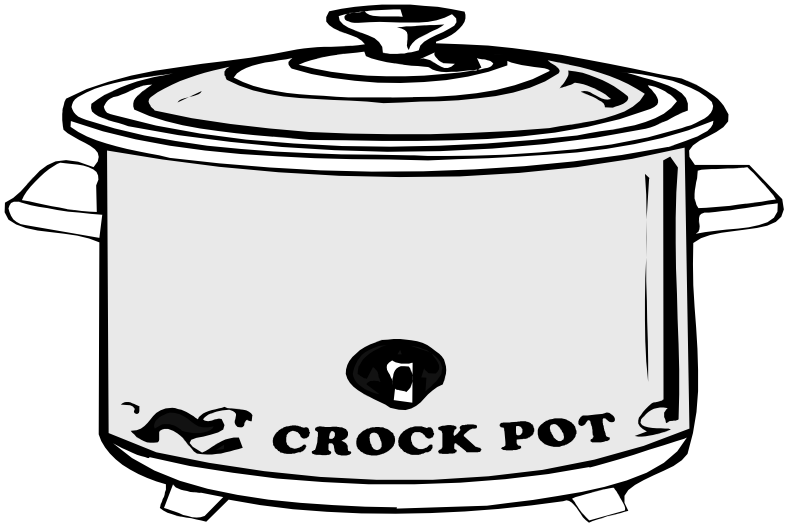
For Cooking Without Looking



Use a Crock Pot

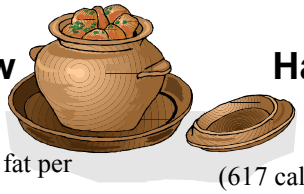
Your county extension office

UW Extension Cooperative Extension Dunn County

Nutrition Education Program
Dunn County UW-Extension
800 Wilson Avenue, Room 330
Menomonie WI 54751
(715) 232-1636

Menu Idea
Beef Stew
Crackers
Canned Peaches
Lowfat Milk

Beef Stew



Makes 8 servings
(343 calories, 16 grams carbohydrates, 20 grams fat per serving)

3 carrots, cut up
3 potatoes, cut up
2 lbs. beef chuck or stew meat in 1½-inch cubes
1 cup water or beef stock
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 garlic clove
1 bay leaf
Salt to taste
½ teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon paprika
3 onions, quartered
1 celery stalk, cut up

Put all ingredients in crock pot in order listed. Stir just enough to mix spices. Cover and set to Low for 10-12 hours. (High: 5-6 hours.)

Menu Idea
Ham & Scalloped Potatoes
Peas
Canned Plums
Lowfat Milk

Ham & Scalloped Potatoes

Makes 4 servings
(617 calories, 71 grams carbohydrates, 21 grams fat per serving)

6-8 slices of ham (about 1 pound)
8-10 medium potatoes, peeled & thinly sliced
2 onions, peeled & thinly sliced
Salt & pepper
1 cup grated cheddar or American cheese
1 can (10 oz.) cream of celery or mushroom soup
Paprika

Put half of ham, potatoes and onions in slow cooker, sprinkle with salt and pepper, then grated cheese. Repeat with remaining half. Spoon undiluted soup over top. Cover and cook on Low 8-10 hours, or High 4 hours. Sprinkle with paprika.

Baked Potatoes

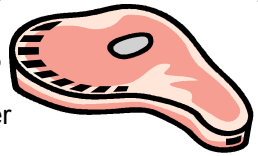
(113 calories, 26 grams carbohydrates, .12 grams fat each)

Poke potatoes with fork and wrap in foil. Fill the crock pot with 6 to 12 potatoes. Cover and cook on Low 8 to 10 hours (High: 2½ to 4). Do not add water.

Menu Idea
Round Steak Casserole
Canned Pears
Lowfat Milk

Round Steak Casserole

Makes 8 servings
(317 calories, 26 grams carbohydrates, 13 grams fat per serving)



2 pounds round steak, cut ½-inch thick
Garlic salt, salt, pepper
1 onion, thinly sliced
3 to 4 potatoes, peeled and quartered (optional)
1 can French-style green beans, drained
1 can (10-oz.) tomato soup
1 pound can tomatoes (peeled and whole)

Season round steak lightly with garlic salt, salt and pepper. Cut into serving pieces and place in crock pot with sliced onion, which has been separated into rings. Add potatoes and green beans. Top with tomato soup and tomatoes. Cover and cook on Low for 8 hours. Remove cover during last half-hour if too liquid. To cook in 2-quart crock pot, reduce ingredients slightly.

Menu Idea
Crock Pot Pork Chops with Mushroom Sauce
over Egg Noodles
Broccoli
Corn Bread
Applesauce
Lowfat Milk

Crock Pot Pork Chops With Mushroom Sauce

Makes 6 to 8 servings
(219 calories, 4 grams carbohydrates, 11 grams fat per serving)

8 to 10 small, thick pork chops
2 teaspoons salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
1/8 teaspoon sage
1 can (12 oz.) cream of mushroom soup
1 Tablespoon dried onion flakes

Trim the excess fat from the chops and use it to grease a large skillet. Over high heat, brown each chop lightly on both sides. Salt and pepper each as it finishes and place it in the crock pot. Add the sage. Turn the soup (undiluted) and the onion flakes into the still hot skillet. Scrape the pan juices and turn them into the cooker. Cover and cook on Low for 8 to 10 hours.

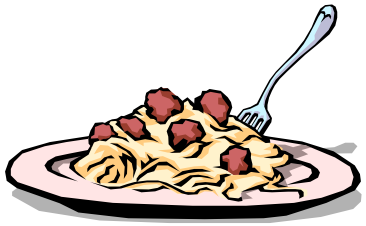
Menu Idea
Mock Lasagna
Mixed Greens Salad
French Bread
Orange Wedges
Lowfat Milk

Mock Lasagna

1 package (10 oz.) broad lasagna noodles, broken into bite-size pieces
1 pound ground beef
½ pound Italian sausage
1 onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
12 oz. Mozzarella cheese, shredded
1 carton (12 oz.) cottage cheese
2 cans (6 oz.) tomato paste
½ cup water
1 teaspoon basil
½ teaspoon pepper
1 ½ Tablespoons dried parsley flakes

Cook noodles according to package directions until tender; drain. Brown ground beef and sausage. Remove liquid fat. Place in lightly greased crock pot. Add all remaining ingredients. Stir to mix thoroughly. Cover; cook on Low 7 to 9 hours. (High: 3 to 5 hours).

Menu Idea
Easy Does It Spaghetti
Raw Cauliflower-Baby Carrots
Garlic Toast
Grapes
Lowfat Milk



Easy Does It Spaghetti

1 pound ground beef
2 Tablespoons dry minced onion
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon garlic powder
2 cans (8 oz.) tomato sauce
1 – 1 ½ teaspoons Italian seasoning
1 can (4 oz.) sliced mushrooms, drained
3 cups tomato juice
1 ½ cups (4 oz.) dry spaghetti, broken in 4-5" pieces

Brown ground beef in skillet and place in crock pot. Add all remaining ingredients except dry spaghetti; stir well. Cover and cook on Low 6-8 hours. (High: 3 to 5 hours). Turn to High last hour and stir in dry spaghetti. Serves 4

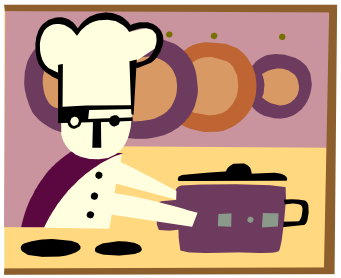
Menu Idea
Quick Onion Pot Roast
Whole Wheat Bread-Butter
Butterscotch Pudding
Lowfat Milk

Quick Onion Pot Roast

1 packet onion soup mix
3 lb. lean beef or pork roast, trim any fat
2-4 potatoes, quartered
3-5 large carrots (cut in 2-inch lengths) or 2-3 cups baby carrots

This roast needs no prior browning.

Sprinkle onion soup over the bottom of the crock pot. Add potatoes and carrots. Add roast; add water to half-way up side of roast. Cover and cook on Low about 10 hours or 5 hours on High.



Menu Idea
Hot Shredded Beef or Pork Roast on Bun
Baby Carrots-Pickles
Peach Cobbler
Lowfat Milk

Peach Cobbler

¾ cup all-purpose baking mix
1/3 cup sugar
½ cup packed brown sugar
½ can evaporated milk
2 teaspoons margarine or butter, melted
2 eggs, slightly beaten
3 large, ripe fresh or canned peaches, peeled, pitted and coarsely chopped
2 teaspoons vanilla
¾ teaspoon cinnamon
Vanilla ice cream (optional)

Lightly grease slow cooker or coat with non-stick cooking spray. Combine baking mix and sugars in a large bowl. Stir in milk, margarine and eggs. Add peaches, vanilla and cinnamon. Stir until ingredients are well incorporated. Pour into slow cooker. Cover and cook on Low for 6 to 8 hours or on High for 3 to 4 hours. Serve warm. Top with vanilla ice cream, if desired.
Serves 4